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The nations shall learn war no more.

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EVANGELISM AND WAR.

The Rev. J. L. Atkinson, a missionary of the American Board in Japan, writing of "Evangelism and War" in a recent number of the *Independent*, has the following to say of the way in which the Korean war is disturbing Christian work in Japan:

"It seems more than probable that the war with China, which Japan has entered on in such a zealous and seemingly light-hearted way, may seriously hinder the progress of evangelistic and church work. One evangelist has been called from my field to join his regiment of Reserves. In some parts of the country the first and second Reserves have already been called into service. Other evangelists, pastors and church members will also be called to active military duty. Buddhist priests are not exempt from the same liability. The calling away of Christian workers and givers will inevitably embarrass and retard the progress of all Christian work. Besides this the war spirit is at fever heat all through the Empire. The war is immensely popular with all classes, and everyone wants to do something to help it on. In Kobe, as in other cities, a committee of three pastors has been elected by the Christians of the several denominations to raise funds for the use of the Japanese Red Cross Society, and for other war purposes. The Doshisha Nurses' School wants to send to the seat of war a dozen or so of its graduates and students, and wants the Christians to contribute the money necessary to send them. The Christians are as patriotic and zealous as any of the people, and they are further stimulated to an exhibition of these qualities by the knowledge that their conduct in the matter will be sharply watched by their non-Christian critics, who for years have been loudly declaring that the adoption of Christianity would inevitably weaken the patriotic spirit. Thus, with the entire nation on fire with zeal about the war, it will be exceedingly difficult to stimulate any lively interest in church and evangelistic work. The educational work of the various missions will also be likely to suffer in the same way and for the same reasons."

Worse than any of the immediate obstacles thrown in the way of Christian work in Japan will be the permanent compromising of Christianity, which will result from the

zealous participation of the Christians in the war. Even if purely defensive war were admitted to be right, no one can claim that Japan is carrying on a defensive war with China. If there ever was a war from which Christians ought absolutely to abstain, this is certainly one. It seems deplorable that the Christian missions should have failed to give the Japanese Christians such a conception of the real nature of Christianity as would have kept them entirely aloof from the present conflict, except co-operation in the work of the Red Cross and other similar organizations in giving relief to the sick and wounded. Such a course would have brought a temporary strain on Christianity in Japan, and might have resulted in the killing or exiling of some Christians, but the cause of Christ would have gained infinitely in the long run by such a procedure.

The "non-Christian critics" seem to have rightly interpreted the religion of Christ as opposed to war and fighting. Shall Christians make an effort to prove that their religion does not mean what even its enemies see in the very nature of the case that it does mean? Christianity never weakens the patriotic spirit. On the contrary, only true Christians are capable of exhibiting the right sort of patriotism. It is a part of the mission of Christianity, however, to change the conception of patriotism from the semi-barbarous and unfraternal meaning often given to it into something more nearly in harmony with the teachings of Jesus. Church work will suffer and be retarded in both Japan and China for long years to come from the bitterness and increased animosity which are certain to grow out of the present war, and from the resulting intensified spirit of narrow and selfish nationalism to which Christianity is everywhere and forever opposed.

Further also, the "non-Christian critics" will be sure to hold in still greater contempt a religion whose devotees have not sufficient insight and courage to be loyal to its most essential principles. Instead of being won to Christianity by the China-hating spirit and war zeal of these "patriotic" Japanese Christians, they are certain to laugh still louder in their mocking opposition to it and to double their efforts to drive it out of the Empire.

It is not many years ago that Japanese envoys came west to England, sent by the Government to examine into the practical effects of Christianity, with a view to its possible adoption as the national religion of Japan. When they returned, they reported that the extensive preparations of the English to fight their fellow-men were so opposed to the principles of peace found in the religion which they professed that they thought it unadvisable that any change should be made in the national religion of Japan. Since then it seems that the "rifle in the hand" has had more influence in Japan than the "Bible in the knapsack," and not only have the Japanese learned and accepted the arts of war of the western nations, but even the Japanese Christians are falling into

the perverted sort of man-hating, unforgiving Christianity so well known in the West. Are the "non-Christian critics" any more likely to be attracted toward a "fighting" Christianity when they see it in actual operation in their own country than when they saw it building iron-clads and making Gatling guns in England?

We sympathize deeply with the vein of sadness and perplexity which run through Mr. Atkinson's letter from which we quote. War always cripples and often entirely breaks up Christian work, even when Christian workers have been entirely faithful to the peace principles of the Gospel. Christianity ought everywhere with solid front to oppose it as one of its most deadly enemies. It is a well known historic fact that whenever war breaks out between two peoples, the conversion of men to Christ nearly entirely ceases among them. It could not be otherwise. War is "the hour and power of darkness," when "an eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth" becomes the law of men's thoughts, words and actions, and no place is left for love and mercy and the forgiveness of enemies, without the cherishing of which one can not be Christ's disciple. We fear that a great opportunity has been lost in the East, from the failure of the Christian missions there to inculcate prominently in their teachings the radical opposition between the Christ-spirit and the war-spirit, otherwise the "Christians" would not be "holding sunrise meetings to pray for the success" of their armies, but would be unitedly beseeching God to put a speedy end to the cruel and inhuman war.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE MILITIA.

The following notice was sent to the various Principals of the Boston Public Schools on the 5th of October:

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS.
SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

To the Principals of Schools:

By order of the President of the School Committee, there will be no sessions of the Boston Public Schools on Tuesday, Oct. 9, 1894, the day of the Mobilization of the Militia of Massachusetts in Boston.

You will please give notice of this order to the teachers under your charge, and see that proper announcement of it is made in the schools of your district.

By order of the President.

PHINEAS BATES, Secretary.

Boston, Oct. 5, 1894.

The purpose of this action of the President of the School Committee, though not distinctly stated, is perfectly clear from the wording of the order. It was that the Directors of the schools, and through them the teachers and pupils of the schools, might show special honor to the military organization of the State, and that the youth of Boston might have leisure to see the military display and become fired with the martial spirit. The advocates of the military drill in the schools have,

for the most part, strenuously denied that they wish to cultivate a military spirit in the boys, and that the drill has any tendency to create such a spirit. But the President of the Boston School Board has made it evident that he is not of this manner of thinking. He would doubtless agree with the *Boston Journal* in saying (Oct. 10) that "to encourage this militant spirit among the youth is recognized here as one of the chief duties of patriotic statesmanship." The dismissing of the schools was not to give the pupils a holiday for rest, but a bowing down in reverence, pure and simple, of the whole educational work of Boston to the military organization, without which it is supposed that Massachusetts cannot even to-day exist in safety.

We thought it was beginning to be recognized that the world had reached a stage of maturity when the fighting spirit ought to be eliminated from society, but here we have the Head Manager of one of the finest city school systems in the world practically saying: "No; one of the chief duties of modern education is to teach the boys (and the girls, too,) to develop their fighting instincts and to love the pomp and display of militarism." We cannot believe that the masters and sub-masters and teachers of the schools, who are in daily contact with the pupils, and see the need of having them learn to suppress their selfish and retaliative instincts, are in sympathy with this wholesale effort to have the spirit of fighting intensified in them.

Even if we grant that the militia is a necessity in the present state of society, there is no occasion whatever to bring it forward so conspicuously as was done on this occasion. Why not bring out the police force of our city and put it in parade in the same way? The police are much more needed for the preservation of order, and they are daily, often without any recognition whatever, performing the most thankless kind of services for us. The militia, on the contrary, are kept at the expense of the State and rarely, if ever, from year's end to year's end, perform any service whatever. The police were certainly more entitled to a parade, but that would not have served the purpose of those who wish to foster the fighting spirit. There is no "glory" in being a policeman.

But why, even if the mobilization of the troops had to occur, should *sixty-five thousand* boys and girls be interrupted in their school work for a whole day because *six thousand* men were to march for a few hours in the streets? Why did not the business men of the city, whose property would be endangered in case of riot or invasion, close all their houses for the day and send all their clerks out on the streets to be inflamed anew with "patriotism"? One has only to ask such questions, to see how crafty the War God is in making it his special purpose to get out all the children of tender age and susceptible minds, when he flies his flags and rattles his drums.